The Artist and the Cat - Chapter 7

While the artist was out buying food at a nearby Asian restaurant, Rita was pushing one of the wooden stools towards the front door of the house with Runt looking on in confusion.

Runt: "Umm... Rita?"

Rita: "What is it, Runt?"

Runt: "Why are you moving that thing all the way to the front door?"

Rita: "I want to give our new owner a surprise when he comes back."

Runt: "A surprise? What is it?"

Rita: "You'll see..."

Moments later, the pair heard a car approaching the house. It was the artist who had returned from his short trip. He got off the car carrying two large bags filled with food that was purchased at the restaurant. He locked the car with the device and got ready to unlock the front door of the house with his key.

Rita: "Ooh... He's coming!"

Runt: "Oh, boy! Food!"

The artist unlocked the front door and started to open it while still holding the bags of food. Rita was waiting for him to enter with anticipation. After completely opening the door, the artist walks inside the house and is greeted in a most unusual way.

Rita: "Welcome home, sweetie!"

Rita leaps from the stool and wraps her arms around the artist, giving him a hug and then a small kiss on the lips. Runt decides to follow Rita's lead and wraps his arms around the artist's legs in a warm embrace. The artist pats Runt on the head and gives Rita a kiss before helping her down to the floor.

Artist: "Wow! This is quite the surprise! I wasn't gone for that long, but I appreciate the loving gestures anyway. You two are in for quite a treat!"

Rita: "Great! I'm totally famished!"

Runt: "Yeah. I'm hungry. Definitely, definitely hungry..."

The artist locks the front door of the house and then places the bags on the dining room table. He takes out a really hot container filled with wonton soup and three takeout boxes. He then gets three plates and three glasses of cold water and places them gently on the table. Runt happily jumps into his chair while the artist picks up

Rita and places the lovely kitty in hers.

Artist: "I'm going to serve the meals now. I bought plenty to share amongst the three of us."

The artist takes the lid off the container with the wonton soup and opens the takeout boxes containing the other meals. He gets a serving spoon from the kitchen and starts to divide the food equally among the three.

Artist: "I brought the pork fried rice that Runt requested as well as the sushi you asked for, Rita. I also brought some chicken lo mein for myself, but we can all share our orders together."

Rita: "I love that idea! Then we can all try a little bit of everything."

Runt: "Yum! Let's eat!"

The artist also took out some small bags of fried noodles from one of the large bags and added them to the three plates of food. After emptying out the fried noodles, he went to the kitchen to get a fork as well as some napkins. When he returned to the table, he already saw his new friends enjoying their meals.

Artist: "Eat up, you two. And remember that we can save some for leftovers if you feel full."

Rita and Runt were happily eating everything off their plates. It had been a long time since they had a fresh hot meal and ended up eating everything down to the last grain of rice. Rita then quickly grabbed the container filled with wonton soup and placed a bit of it on her plate.

Artist: "Be careful, Rita. It might still be pretty hot..."

Rita: "I'm sure it should've cooled down by now..."

Rita quickly took a bite of one of the wontons and ended up burning her tongue.

Rita: "Yeow!"

Artist: "Drink your water, honey! It'll help you ease the pain."

Rita took a sip of the cold water which helped her tongue to cool off from the burning sensation. She placed her right paw on his arm as a sign of gratitude.

Rita: "Whew... That feels a bit better. Thank you."

Artist: "I've had that happen to me before so that's why I had these glasses of cold water ready just in case."

Rita: "I'm glad that you were prepared, Mr. Artist."

The artist served the rest of the soup with the serving spoon so that everyone at the table could try some. After a few minutes, everyone was finally finished with their meals.

Rita: "How did you enjoy the food, Runt?"

Runt: "It was good. Definitely, definitely good... Burp!"

Rita: "Rude..."

Artist: "Next time, try to cover your mouth if you're about to belch like that. Especially in front of a lady..."

Runt: "Okay. Sorry, Rita..."

Rita: "Don't sweat it, Runt. I'm used to your shenanigans by now."

The artist looks into the bags and pulls out three small fortune cookies wrapped in plastic. He opens the plastic wrapping from all three and gives one to Rita, Runt and himself.

Rita: "Oh... This is a fortune cookie. I can't wait to read my fortune."

Artist: "Yeah. I wonder what mine says..."

Runt: "Ooh! Dessert! I'll eat it in one bite!"

Artist: "Wait! You're supposed to..."

Before the artist could finish explaining, Runt had eaten the fortune cookie, paper and all.

Rita: "Well, Runt. You did it again..."

Runt: "Huh? Did what?"

Artist: "You were supposed to break the cookie in half and remove the paper before eating it. Now you won't know what it said."

Runt: "There's always next time. Definitely, definitely a next time."

Rita: "Sigh... Hey! Mine says 'A chance happening will reveal your destiny'. Whoa..."

Artist: "Hey, look at this! Mine says 'A stranger will cross your path who later becomes your friend'. Our fortunes sound like our first meeting last night. Crazy..."

Rita: "Well... I guess we really were destined to become friends after all..."

Runt: "Aww... Now I wanted to know what mine was..."

Artist: "Don't worry, Runt. I'll wager that it was something similar to the ones we received."

The artist started picking up everything from the table with the pets pitching in. Rita with Runt's help had tossed the bags and empty containers into the trash while the artist was washing the plates and the eating utensils. Moments later, the three friends headed to the living room and the artist turned on the television.

Artist: "This is the television remote. Use these buttons to change channels until you find something that interests you. I'm going to take a bath so you two can just enjoy yourselves in the meantime."

Runt: "Okay! I wonder what fun show I could find."

Rita: "Enjoy your bath, honey. I'll keep an eye on things here."

Artist: "Thanks, Rita. I won't be long."

The artist goes to the bedroom to get a change of clothes and then enters the bathroom and locks the door. Once inside, he starts up the water to fill the bathtub and then takes off his clothes and places them in the laundry hamper. With the tub filled to the height desired, he carefully enters the tub and closes the curtain.

Artist: "Ahh... This is so relaxing... Rita and Runt are being entertained with the television and I have a bit of alone time."

Moments later, while the artist was lathering his hair with shampoo, he heard what sounded like the nearby toilet being flushed. He slowly opened the curtain and saw a familiar white paw about to touch him.

Artist: "Huh? Rita? How did you get in here? The door was locked."

Rita: "Oh... I think I drank too much water and couldn't hold it in anymore. I had Runt gently push the wooden stool next to the bathroom door and then I used one of my claws to unlock the door and here I am."

Artist: "I'm sorry, Rita. If I had known that you had to use the bathroom, I would've waited for you to finish first."

Rita: "Eh... It's no big deal. Besides, now we can bathe together..."

Artist: "Well.. The thing is..."

Rita: "What is it? Oh, I get it. You've never been naked around a girl before..."

Artist: "Yeah..."

Rita: "Don't be silly, sweetie. I'm always naked..."

Artist: "That's true. Okay, you can join me in the tub."

Rita climbs into the tub and gets herself comfortable while the artist continues to lather his hair with shampoo. Rita raises her right paw and asks for him to lather her fur with some shampoo as well.

Rita: "Ahh... This feels so relaxing. Loosen up a little, honey. I won't bite."

Artist: "All right. I'm going to get the bar of soap so I can start washing myself."

The artist picks up the nearby bar of soap and starts rubbing it on his hands so he can wash himself. Rita notices him struggling to reach his back and decides to pitch in.

Rita: "Here! Let me help you out with that. I can scrub your back for you. After all, you did massage my back earlier so I'm simply repaying the favor."

The artist turns around so Rita can gently wash his back with her paws lathered up with soap.

Artist: "Thanks, Rita. I always have a hard time reaching my back. One time, I sprained my arm trying to reach back there..."

Rita: "Ooh... That must've really hurt..."

Artist: "Yeah. I couldn't draw for a while after that."

Rita: "Well... You have me to help you out now. I don't need to take a bath every day, but I'm willing to help you out in any way that I can. After all, you have a really nice body..."

Upon hearing Rita's compliment, the artist's face turned a little red.

Artist: "Thank you, Rita. Would you like to lean onto me for a while?"

Rita: "I'd love to!"

Rita moves toward the artist and wraps her arms around his chest as the pair relaxes for a while in the tub. She closes her eyes and begins to hum a tune that she used to sing back when she was on the road with Runt.

Artist: "You have a heavenly voice. I'm so happy that you entered my life."

Rita: "And I'm happy that you entered mine. I was desperately seeking compassion until we met last night at the bridge. Those fortune cookies were right. We really were destined to be together."

The artist and Rita spent a few more moments together and then they both got out of the tub. The artist drained the water and then got a pair of towels for himself and

for the love of his life.

Rita: "Thank you for a lovely time, Mr. Artist. You'll be well rewarded in bed tonight..."

Artist: "Wait. Aren't you going to sleep in your new cat bed tonight?"

Rita: "What... And leave you all alone in yours? I'm your girlfriend after all..."

Artist: "All right, Rita. You can sleep with me again tonight. I don't mind..."

Rita: "Then it's settled. Get dressed and we'll join Runt in the living room. I wonder what program he finally decided to watch."

Artist: "I wonder about that too. C'mon, honey. Let's not keep him waiting any longer."

After finally drying himself off with his towel, the artist put on his clothes and carried Rita outside the bathroom and into the living room. Runt had dozed off on the couch while the television was left on a channel showing reruns of a cartoon series about a grouchy green hermit and his overweight dog. The artist turned off the program and then took a blanket from his bedroom and placed it on Runt so he could sleep more comfortably. After turning off all the lights in the house, the artist and Rita went to bed together and spent their second evening as a couple in total bliss.